



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Sawtooth National  
Forest

Burley/Twin Falls Ranger  
Districts  
3650 S. Overland Ave.  
Burley, Id. 83318-3242  
208-678-0430  
208-737-3200

File Code: 2810

m/003/055

Date: March 9, 2001

Dear Sawtooth National Forest Shareholder:

Interstate Rock Quarries, Inc. proposes to conduct mineral extraction activities in the Raft River Mountains, in sections 12 & 13 of Township 13N Range 12W in Box Elder County, Utah approximately 20 miles east of Park Valley, Utah (see map). This area is open for mineral entry as outlined in the 1987 Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) for the Sawtooth National Forest, and lies within management area 1L (General Forest). Interstate Rock Quarries Inc. submitted the Plan of Operation (POO) to the Burley/Twin Falls Ranger District of the Sawtooth National Forest, pursuant to 36 CFR 228A. The public is invited to submit written comments regarding issues, alternatives, or concerns related to the proposed quarry.

Enclosed is a "scoping" document for you to review that describes the proposed action for the decision as related to the Sawtooth National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. These alternatives will be reviewed by a team of Forest Service Resource Specialists who will identify issues, concerns, and opportunities. Some concerns and opportunities have already been identified by the Forest Service and are included in the attached documents. The scoping document is available upon request, and questions about the proposals should be directed to Carmela Romerio at the Burley/Twin Falls Ranger District or by phone (208) 678-0430. Comments should be submitted by April 19, 2001 to:

Michael O'Farrell, District Ranger  
Burley/Twin Falls Ranger District  
3650 S. Overland Ave.  
Burley, Idaho 83318

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and address of those who comment will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered, however those submitted anonymously will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27 (d) any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that under FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the

RECEIVED

MAR 12 2001

DIVISION OF  
OIL, GAS AND MINING



Caring for the Land and Serving People

Printed on Recycled Paper

requester of the agencies decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission with or without the name and address within 10 days.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael O'Farrell".

MICHAEL O'FARRELL  
District Ranger

Enclosures



**SCOPING DOCUMENT  
INTERSTATE ROCK QUARRIES, INC.  
CLARK'S BASIN QUARRY PLAN OF OPERATIONS PROPOSAL**

Burley/Twin Falls Ranger District  
Sawtooth National Forest  
3650 S. Overland Ave.  
Burley, Idaho 83318

**PROPOSED ACTION:**

Interstate Rock Quarries, Inc. proposes to conduct mineral extraction activities in the Raft River Mountains, in sections 12 & 13 of Township 13N Range 12W in Box Elder County, Utah approximately 20 miles east of Park Valley, Utah (see map). This area is open for mineral entry as outlined in the 1987 Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) for the Sawtooth National Forest, and lies within management area 1L (General Forest). Interstate Rock Quarries Inc. submitted the Plan of Operation (POO) to the Burley/Twin Falls Ranger District of the Sawtooth National Forest, pursuant to 36 CFR 228A.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The proposed Clark's Basin operations are located in the west end of the Raft River Mountains, in sections 12 & 13 of Township 13N Range 12W in Box Elder County, Utah approximately 20 miles east of Park Valley, Utah (see map). The slope is south facing and in open sage and low brush rangeland. The maximum amount of disturbed ground at any one time is proposed at 41.5 acres, this includes all access roads.

The Operating Plan proposes year round access with winter road maintenance. Heavy equipment to be used includes large track hoes, and up to ten trucks. Traffic may be moderate to heavy depending on the operating period and scale of production. Some of the access to the site will be through private property. The proper authorization will be obtained before improving the roads through public and private property. Approximately two miles of road will need to be upgraded on private property, and two miles of existing forest roads that are proposed for upgrading. Alternative road locations will be considered in this analysis. The company proposes to move a crusher on site to produce material for the road upgrade.

There are three quarry locations proposed. The rock processing areas are located within each quarry site. At the processing site the stone slabs are hand split to size and sorted by grade and size class. Some material may be hauled off site for processing. Limited blasting may occur. No explosives will be stored on site. Storage of fuel and lubricants will be required on site.

The 1987 Land Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) has classified the project area as 1L, General Forest. The Forest Plan general direction for the Management Area 1L for minerals management is that exploration and development of mineral and energy resources may occur (page IV-114 of the Forest Plan). The mineral material being quarried is a quartzite commonly known as Oakley Stone.

#### **PURPOSE AND NEED:**

The purpose and underlying need for action is the submission of Interstate Rock Quarries, Inc. proposed Plan of Operations to mine Oakley Stone and the Forest Services responsibility to approve or require modifications to the proposed plan in accordance with federal mining and environmental laws.

The need of the action is to comply with the mining laws, regulations and policy pertaining to the disposal of uncommon minerals materials from National Forest system lands.

#### **DECISION TO BE MADE:**

The decision to be made by the District Ranger is whether to approve the POO's as submitted or to approve them with modifications. A reclamation bond amount will also be necessary to insure that adequate site reclamation is done if the operator fails to do so upon closing or abandonment of the quarry.

#### **ISSUES TO DATE:**

The following are project issues that have been identified to date, in no specific order:

1. Cultural resources in and near the quarry access roads and work area may be affected. A cultural resource survey and report will need to be completed.
2. The quarry operations could have an effect on threatened, endangered and sensitive plant and animal species. A Biological Assessment and Evaluation will need to be prepared and consulted on.
3. Operations may affect big game winter range. The proposal is to operate year round, which may have an effect on winter range.
4. There is a concern that quarry activities will impact public access in the general area of the quarry.
5. There is a concern that the quarries will be allowed to expand to unlimited size with little reclamation work. Alternatives will be analyzed to reduce the mining disturbance and allow for concurrent reclamation. A reclamation bond will need to be approved.
6. There is a concern that fuels and lubricants will be stored on site. The rock on site, waste and usable stone is inert in its makeup.
7. There is a concern water quality will be impacted by erosion from the quarry site and the access roads. The mine plan will provide for runoff control. The quarry does not need water for operations as the plans were submitted.

8. There is a need for the quarry operator to get additional permits from other agencies. Box Elder County may need to have a Road Maintenance agreement and an excavation permit with the operator of the quarry. Health permits from the Bear River Health for work areas may be needed. Utah Division of Water Quality may require a storm water drainage permit. Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining is working with the Forest Service in a joint permitting process for the approval of the Plan of Operations and reclamation bonding.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The following are the alternatives developed to date for the proposal:

**No Action.** The General Mining Law of 1872, as amended, gives the quarry operator certain rights to conduct mining operations on public lands. Consideration of the No Action Alternative is required by NEPA and serves as a baseline of other alternatives.

**Approval of the Plan of Operation as submitted.** This also includes a reasonable reclamation bond submitted.

**Approval of the Plan of Operation with modifications.** This also includes a reasonable reclamation bond be submitted. The modifications would be plan amendments provided by the Forest Service to protect surface resources and agreed to by the operator.

#### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:**

Public involvement is an important part of supplemental scoping and the environmental analysis process. It ensures that the general public activity participates in the decision-making process and communicates their concerns so that these concerns are addressed in the Environmental Assessment (EA) and other NEPA documents. In addition, involvement by the local governments helps them anticipate the impacts and benefits which could occur from the Project and make necessary plans and changes in public policy.

To encourage public participation, the Forest Service will utilize a variety of techniques including mailing information to interested parties, site tours, presentations at local government organization meetings, and participating in local planning committees at the request of local governments. An updated mailing list of citizens and government agencies has been prepared for mailing Project analysis information as part of the public involvement plan.

Public involvement will be ongoing throughout the analysis process. The public is requested to submit written input on this proposed action accompanied with any additional issues, concerns, or alternatives they may have to the Forest Service, as described in the cover letter.

The most helpful input is that which clearly states your opinion or view of issues regarding environmental impacts of the proposed project on environmental resources. Submit written comments on issues related to the proposed Project to:

**USDA Forest Service  
Sawtooth National Forest  
Burley/Twin Falls Ranger District  
3650 S. Overland Ave.  
Burley, ID 83318  
Attn: Michael O'Farrell, District Ranger**

#### **FOREST SERVICE ROLE AND POLICY:**

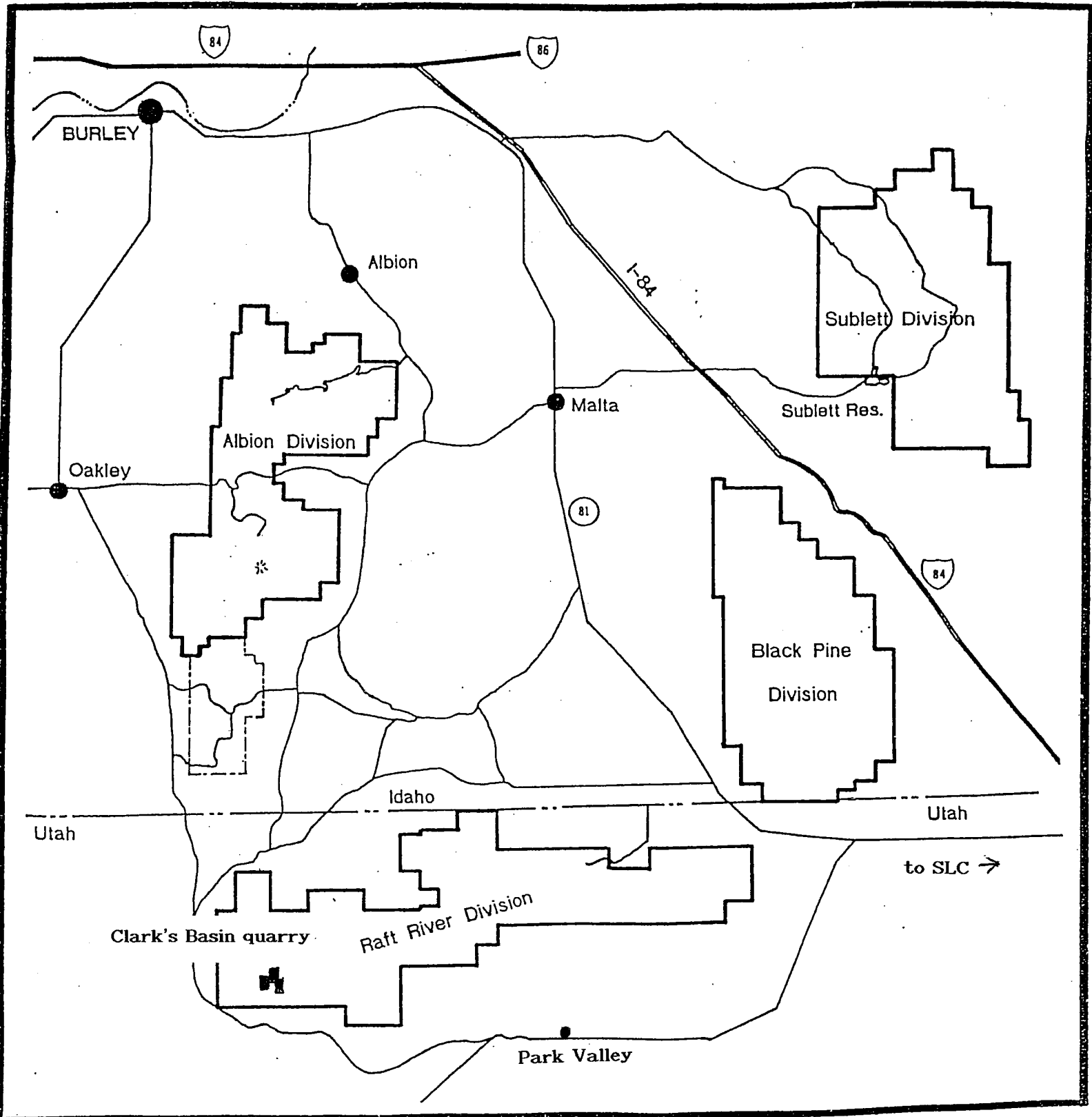
The legal authority of the Forest Service to regulate locatable mineral operations on National Forest System Lands is based on the 1897 Organic Act and described in regulations found in 36 CFR 228A. These mining regulations emphasize Forest Service authority to require Plans of Operations for locatable mineral proposals, which prevent unreasonable and unnecessary environmental damage and provide for reclamation of surface resources. Under these regulations, the responsible official must decide to; (1) approve the Plan of Operations as submitted, (2) approve a Plan of Operations which has been modified to prevent unnecessary and unreasonable environmental resource damage, or (3) approve a Plan of Operations which has been modified contingent upon additional mitigation measures.

The emphasis on reasonableness underscores the importance of a complete analysis of all direct, indirect, and cumulative mining impacts. The analysis is defined by NEPA and its implementing regulations. In order to determine if any significant environmental impacts will occur from the project, NEPA guidelines require that an environmental assessment (EA) be prepared. The Forest Service will comply with NEPA by following a detailed procedure that begins with scoping, additional data collection, and analysis of data necessary to evaluate alternatives. The results of these analyses steps will be documented in a pre-decisional EA, and if appropriate, Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSI). In either case, the NEPA analysis will be the basis for the District Ranger's decision. If significant impacts to environmental resources are identified in the analysis, then an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would have to be prepared on the proposed Plan of Operations. After the detailed Plan of Operations has been developed to conform to the preferred alternative in the NEPA documents, it can then be approved by the District Ranger through a Decision Notice, and Project implementation can begin after seven days, provided there are no appeals and all other required permits are obtained.

The current Forest Plan was completed in 1987 and provides direction for the management and use of the Sawtooth National Forest, including locatable mineral exploration and development activities. The area of the proposed project is open for mineral entry as outlined in the Forest Plan and is designated as General Forest.

# VICINITY MAP

Of the four Mountain Divisions  
on the Burley Ranger District  
Sawtooth National Forest





**Proposed Clarks Basin Mine  
and Access Road  
Box Elder County, Utah**

